

RIGHT ON WITH THE **NOW** SUPER-HERO!

60c



HELL-RIDER

AUG
1971
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A SKYWALD PUBLICATION

BEGINNING... THE
ORIGIN!



HELL-RIDER BATTLES
THE HEROIN-SPAWNED
TERROR OF... THE **CLAW**

ROAR INTO ACTION
WITH THE EXCITING
WILD BUNCH!

WAIT 'LL YOU MEET THE LUSCIOUS
BUTTERFLY!

HELL-RIDER

VOL 1 NO 1

AUG 1971

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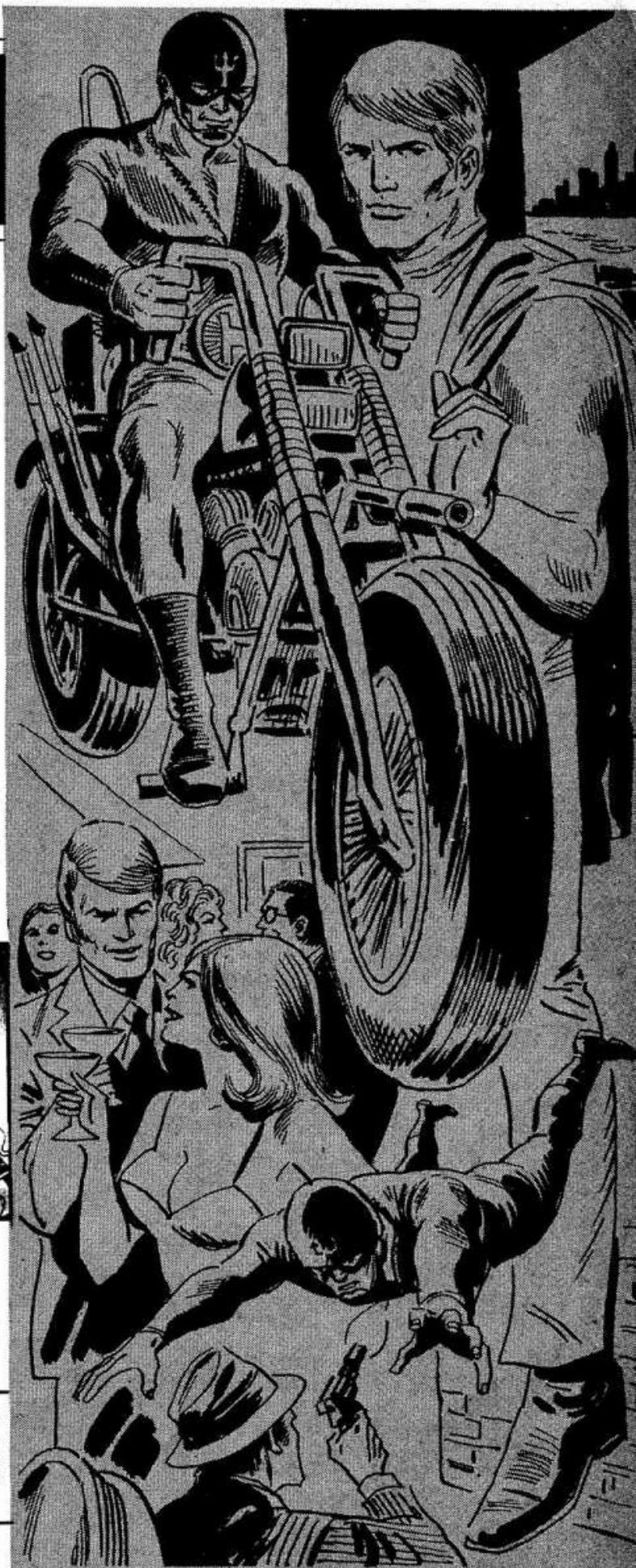
BUTTERFLY



THE WILD BUNCH

Publishers: Israel Waldman & Sol Brodsky

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HOW...



WHY...

HELL-RIDER

The magazine you're reading was born in the offices of Skywald publications on a frigid December morning in 1970. Though the basic idea to produce an adult illustrated adventure mag had been brewing in Editor Sol Brodsky's mind for some time, it wasn't until that particular morning that the transition from dream to reality was made. Sol's with the current trend of showing life as it really is, sweeping other mediums such as books, movies and even television to a degree, it was time for this field to move in the same direction. And so he called in Associate Editor Herschel Waldman and yours truly, free lance writer Gary Friedrich, in hopes that, between the three of us, we could get something down on paper and start the project rolling.

Two hours later, after a lot of heavy discussion and some heated differences of opinion, the basic format had been formed. Our featured character would be a superhero, but not in the typical comic book sense of the word. True, he would somehow be endowed with superhuman abilities—but he also had to be a normal human being in all other aspects, a product of today's world filled with the same doubts and fears and possessed by the same burning zest for a swinging "with-it" life as you and I.

In other words, he had to be a person readers could easily identify with rather than a God-like character who could exist only in fantasy. With this in mind, we soon decided he would ride a motorcycle, be a Viet Nam veteran although not necessarily a supporter of the conflict and come from an upper-middle class Eastern background to which he has become totally alienated. His power would be physical strength to go along with his superior cycling skills,

but he wouldn't be so strong that there wouldn't always be someone stronger, sort of a fastest gun in the West bit, if you can dig what I mean. And we also determined that he must have a basic weakness—that from time to time his strength fails him, a problem he is unable to do anything about.

By now you're probably asking what's so different about all of this? The answer, we felt, was simply to make him as TODAY as possible. He should, we thought, have a prominent profession from which he could expound on his thoughts, personal, political and otherwise, so we made him an attorney for a glamorous Hollywood firm, placing him in contact with many of the best-known personalities of our time. We also felt he should have heavy problems weighing on him, as so many of the NOW generation do. Ahhh, this could go on forever, but what I'm driving at is simply that we wanted Hell Rider to be unique in that he would be a truly human superhero dealing with the human trials of our era in a no-punches-pulled manner. *That's why we chose heroin-smuggling as the basis for our first story.*

Okay! With this much under our belts, we had to come up with the right artists to portray Hell Rider, and we think we hit home with the selection of Ross Andru and Mike Esposito, two of the best known men from the comics field who think young and have a million ideas of their own. Once they agreed to do the job, they got right into the thick of things and tossed in more than their share of ideas for this all-important first issue.

Finally, after weeks of hashing and re-hashing every conceivable thought we had, we were ready to get started. I went

home and scripted the opening story. Then we tore it apart, and I went home and wrote it again and again until, at last, we had it where we felt we wanted it to be. The rest was up to Mike and Ross. Two months later we saw the finished product, and I have to say that it's everything I hoped it would be and maybe even more. First issues are always tough, because if you fail with the premiere, the chance for success in succeeding issues is slim. But I don't think we have to worry about it here, and I hope you feel the same way. Sure, there are things that will need to be changed in the next issue and in the issue after that, and we're hoping that you'll tell us what they are. That's the reason behind this page.



"dealing with the human trials of our era"

Starting next ish, we'll devote this space to your letters and our answers to them, so we hope you'll start writing as soon as you finish reading this. After all, the only way we can give you what you want is if you tell us what it is. So sock it to us, huh? Even if it hurts, we'll do our best to take it.



Even after the initial Hell Rider story was well in the works, we knew we were going to have a lot more pages to fill, so back to the old drawing board. Within a couple of days Sol had come up with The Butterfly, and a short time later I came through with The Wild Bunch. Then, when the characters were firmed up in our heads, we had to figure out what we'd do with them.

At this point I was just getting started with my script of the lead-off Hell Rider tale, and it occurred to me that there could very easily be a connecting thread between him and the other characters. Sol went for the idea, and the result was that we used this first issue to establish that thread via a continuing story through each character's strip. We thought it was a solid idea, and we're happy with the way it worked out. However, we don't want to limit ourselves to that particular format. Therefore, the next issue will feature each character in totally unrelated stories. That way you'll have been able to see both formats in the first two issues, and from there we'll let you tell us which you like best.

Well, I'm running out of space, and I've said about everything I feel was necessary. I'm hoping that from now on I'll be listening on this page most of the time, but that's up to you.

Write about anything that turns you on, Hell Rider, The Butterfly, The Wild Bunch or the mag as a whole. . . or even about your Aunt Zelda's turnip patch. We'll be waiting.

Gary Friedrich

Send your letters to:
HELL RIDER, Room 1501
18 East 41 St., New York City, N.Y. 10017

BIOGRAPHY



Ross Andru

about Andru and Esposito



Mike Esposito

A team in the true sense of the word . . . they've worked together and have been friends for many, many years. Their names have been linked with some of the top strips and characters ever created.

They met atop the steps leading to Music and Art High School in New York, amidst a "friendly" student snowball fight. Ross had put down his briefcase full of school books and was fashioning another snowball when Mike ambled up to him. "You're Ross Andru, aren't you?" he said . . . catching one in the back of his neck as he continued unperturbed. "We're recruiting guys for our animated cartoon club and heard you were interested," said Mike. "Yeah," Ross replied, "I hear you have a film on production." "A trip to Mars," Mike interjected.

It's not "Fantasia", but it's a beginning. And it was a beginning. The beginning of a long friendship. Ross and Mike both dug Disney and thought the artform to end all forms was animation. They planned and schemed at starting their own studio. But the final phases of World War II intervened.

Ross got out sooner and got a job in a small commercial animated cartoon studio, but television was in its infancy and commercial animation had not taken hold as yet. By the time Mike came back—the studio had folded—and the movie industry was in the doldrums.

A new school had just opened offering professional training in comic strips and comic books. They both joined. Mike hit the industry first. "Come on in Ross, the water's fine," he said flashing a wad of bills before Ross's eyes.

Before you could blink your eyes they had teamed up and have been together ever since. They've handled every trend—westerns, crime, love, adventure, superheroes—you name it. For many years they did war comics as well as long lasting features—Metal Men and a ten year run with Wonder Woman. They even tried their hand at publishing their own magazines.

In 1953-1954, two of their titles were in 3.D. A process which unfortunately was not accepted by the public. The other title which was successful for its time was a satire comic called "Get Lost." After that it was back to free-lancing for National, Marvel, and now happily for Skywald.

Ross Andru and his lovely and most understanding wife Nathalie, reside in Rockaway, N.Y. Mike Esposito and his charming wife Irene, and their four children, Michele-18, Mark-15, Miche'-5, Rippey-1. (The last two are the pet dogs.) They reside and also "live" in Howard Beach, New York.

That's how it started, and that's how it's been.—

SUBSCRIPTION NEWS: In anticipation of a flood of requests, we're opening a new subscription dept. — Send \$3.50 for 6 issues to:

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MIDNIGHT AT MALIBU--- THE RHYTHMIC ROLLING OF THE WAVES AGAINST THE LUXURY BEACH HOUSE'S PILINGS HAS LULLED THE INHABITANTS INTO A SENSE OF DROWSY SECURITY! **THEN IT COMES**--- AT FIRST A LOW DRONE IN THE DISTANCE, PERHAPS A SPORTS CAR MAKING ITS WAY ALONG THE NEARLY DESERTED PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY! **BUT IT GROWS LOUDER AND LOUDER UNTIL, BY THE TIME THE HOUSE'S STUNNED OCCUPANTS REALIZE WHAT IS HAPPENING**---

IN CASE YOU CLOWNS HAVEN'T HEARD OF ME, IT'S NOT SURPRISING--

-- THIS IS MY FIRST TIME OUT AS-- THE **HELL RIDER!**



introducing... **THE HELL RIDER**



WHOEVER THAT CLOWN IS, HE JUST TOOK OUT CHUCK AND HARRY! **GET HIM!**

CHOK KCHOK

...A STRANGE MAN HAS CRASHED THE SCENE--- A MAN WHO WILL HAVE A DRASTIC EFFECT ON THE FUTURE OF THE PAD'S COSTUMED INHABITANTS --- A MAN WHOSE DESTINY MAY WELL CHANGE THE COURSE OF THE ENTIRE WORLD--- AND A MAN WHO IS DOOMED TO A LIFE OF LONELY FRUSTRATION EVEN THOUGH HE WILL CONSTANTLY BE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION FOR MILLIONS-- A MAN CALLED---

THE HELL RIDER!

YAGH!



BUT JUST AS THE SHOT IS CAREFULLY
SQUEEZED OFF---









AND JUST A FEW HOURS LATER, IT WAS ALL OVER...



I'D BEEN IN SAN FRANCISCO FOR TWO MONTHS DOING A LOT OF NOTHING... THEN ONE DAY I FOUND MYSELF IN A TOUGH OAKLAND BAR...





YOU'RE GONNA BE
REAL SORRY YOU
DID THAT, SONNY!



WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH
YOU, FELLA?
CAN'T YOU DO
ANYTHING BUT
RUN OFF AT
THE MOUTH!

YOU HAVE A
BEEF-- LET'S
SETTLE IT--
NOW!



THAT'S JUST WHAT I
PLAN TO DO! I'M
GONNA CARVE YOU
UP INTO LITTLE
PIECES---

THEN YOU'D
BETTER STOP
TALKING AND
START CARVING!



GUESS I SHOULD'VE
TOLD YOU I'M
BLACK BELT!
PICKED IT UP
ON THE SIDE AT
LAW SCHOOL!

NOW
IF ANY
ONE OF
YOU-- OR
ALL OF
YOU
WANT TO
TAKE
ME ON--

**LET'S
GO!**



EASY, MAN! WE
WERE ONLY
**FEELIN' YOU
OUT!** CAN'T
HAVE JUST
ANYBODY
DRINKIN' WITH
US, Y'KNOW!

BUT IT LOOKS
LIKE YOU'RE
OKAY! WHADDA-
YA SAY WE FOR-
GET IT--- AND I'LL
BUY YOU A BEER!

SOUNDS
FAIR
ENOUGH!



SO YOU'RE AN HONEST-
TO-GOD **MOUTHPIECE!**
MAN, WE COULD USE A
DUDE LIKE YOU IN THE
GANG! I MEAN, WE
NEED A LAWYER EVERY
NOW AND THEN-- AND
WE CAN ALWAYS USE A
BLACK BELT KARATE
MAN!

I CAN
BELIEVE
THAT!



THEN WHY DON'T
YOU **RIDE** WITH US!
GUARANTEE YOU
LOTS OF KICKS
AND PLENTY OF
WOMEN!

ANIMAL!
YOU'VE GOT
YOURSELF
A **BOY!**

KLINK

IT WAS SOME KIND OF A *SCENE*, RIDING WITH THE WILD BUNCH, LIKE, I FELT *REBORN!* AFTER A STUFFY YOUTH IN THE EAST, THE WAY THESE CATS LIVED REALLY TURNED ME ON! THE RUNS, THE FIGHTS, THE SCRAPS WE HAD--- AND THE *WOMEN!* IT WAS A LIFE I NEVER KNEW *EXISTED*-- AND ONCE I FOUND IT, I PULLED IT CLOSE TO ME, AND MADE UP MY MIND TO NEVER LET IT *GO*...



YEAH, THAT WAS THE LIFE, SIX MONTHS OF DOING NOTHING BUT **RAISING HELL** AND HAVING A BLAST! SURE, WE HAD SOME TROUBLE AND BUSTED A FEW SKULLS, BUT NEVER ANYTHING I CONSIDERED REALLY **BAD!** I HAD MY OWN CODE OF **ETHICS**, AND WHAT THE GANG DID FIT IT **PERFECTLY!** BUT IT WAS TOO GOOD TO **LAST...**

OH, NO!

BRICK REESE--
757 LA CIENAGA
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

GREETINGS:

YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO REPORT TO
THE OAKLAND INDUCTION CENTER AT
7:00 A.M. ON MONDAY THE



AND AFTER BASIC AND A TOUGH TWELVE-MONTH RUN THROUGH THE RICE PADDIES OF VIET NAM, I ONLY HAD THREE WEEKS TO GO WHEN THEY SENT ME OUT ON **PATROL**

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED, REESE! CHARLIE'S GOTTA BE AROUND HERE **SOMEWHERE!**

SURE HE DOES, NEVER BEEN ON A PATROL YET WHEN HE DIDN'T SHOW UP!

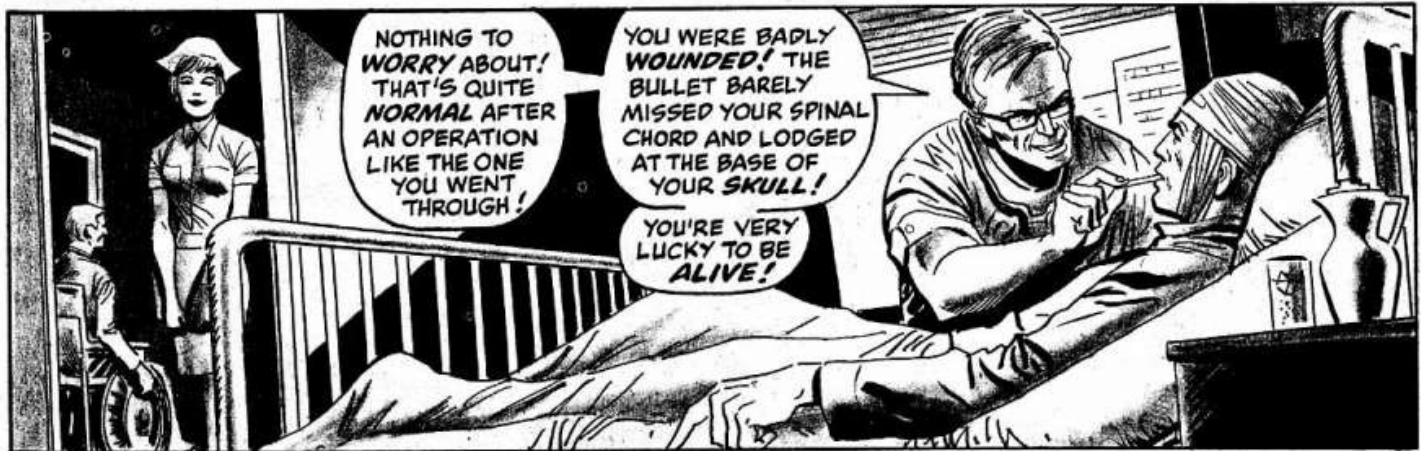
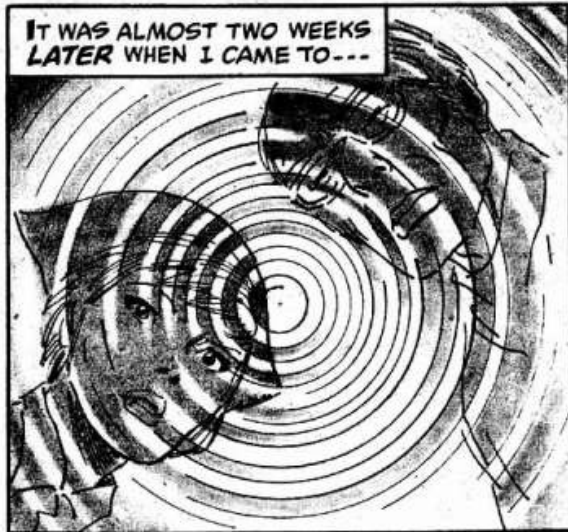


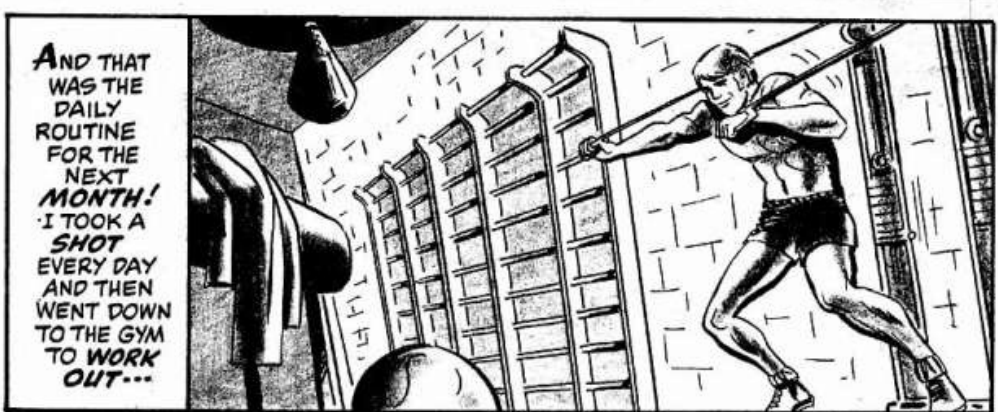
GOD! THIS IS THE WORST ONE YET! THEY'VE GOT US IN A **CROSS-FIRE!**

A FEW CRUMMY WEEKS TO GO, AND I HAVE TO GET CAUGHT IN AN **AMBUSH!**

-- ONE THAT IT LOOKS LIKE **NOBODY'S** GONNA COME BACK FROM!







BEST NEWS I'VE HEARD IN A LONG TIME! NOW ALL I WANT TO KNOW IS-- WHEN THE DEVIL CAN I SPLIT THIS HOSPITAL AND GO HOME?!



THE ANSWER WASN'T THE BEST I COULD'VE GOTTEN, BUT THE DOC ASSURED ME I'D BE STATESIDE BOUND IN ANOTHER FEW WEEKS IF EVERYTHING WENT WELL---

SO, FEELING PRETTY GOOD ABOUT THAT, I WENT DOWN TO THE GYM TO WORK OFF SOME OF THE ADRENALIN THAT WAS PULSING THROUGH MY VEINS---



AND THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPENED---



IT EXPLODED-- LIKE A BALLOON! I NEVER HEARD OF ANYTHING LIKE IT!



I FINALLY GAVE UP TRYING TO FIGURE THAT ONE OUT AND WALKED OVER TO THE WEIGHTS AND PULLEYS. AND---

WRRUNKKK



I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT! I MEAN, I WORKED MYSELF INTO PRETTY GOOD SHAPE---

--BUT BRUNO SAMMARTINO COULDN'T HAVE DONE WHAT I JUST DID!

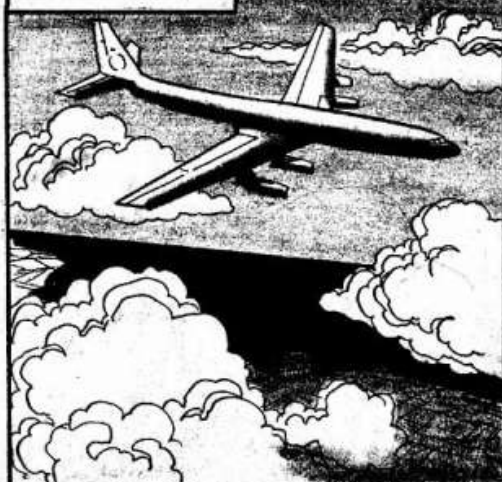


I DAMNED NEAR WENT CRAZY AFTER THAT! I TRIED TO MAKE EXCUSES--- BUT IT KEPT HAPPENING ALL OVER AGAIN!

UNTIL THERE WAS FINALLY NOTHING I COULD DO BUT ACCEPT IT! SOMEHOW, SOME WAY, I HAD ACQUIRED STRENGTH OF UNBELIEVABLE PROPORTIONS!

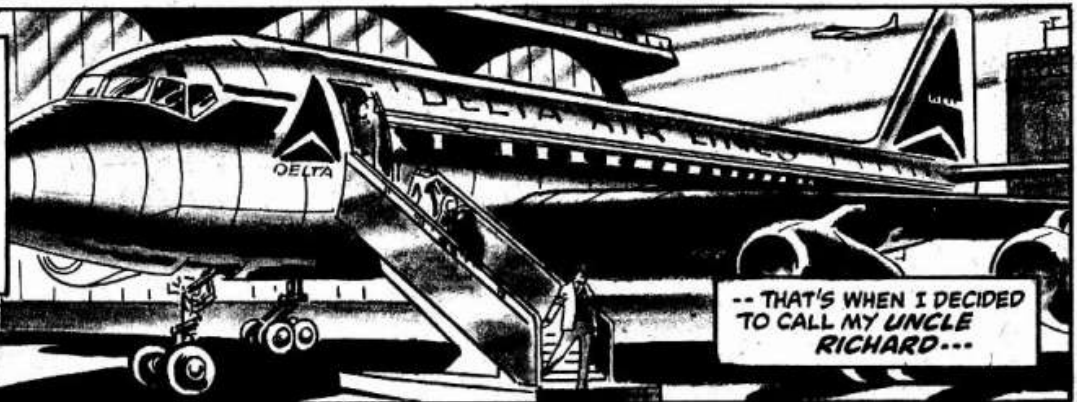


BUT, I DIDN'T TELL THE DOC ABOUT IT! I WAS AFRAID IT WOULD MAKE HIM KEEP ME IN JAPAN---



--AND ALL I WANTED WAS TO GET HOME -- BACK TO THE WORLD! THEN, AFTER THREE MONTHS OF TREATMENT, I WAS FINALLY ON MY WAY!

THEN, AS I SET FOOT ON AMERICAN SOIL FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN A YEAR-- IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO WITH MY LIFE---



-- THAT'S WHEN I DECIDED TO CALL MY UNCLE RICHARD---

BRICK! I WAS HOPING YOU'D CALL ME WHEN YOU GOT BACK!

I HAVE BIG PLANS FOR YOU, MY BOY! WHY DON'T YOU COME RIGHT OVER TO MY PLACE?

THEN WE CAN DISCUSS YOUR FUTURE! I THINK YOU'LL LIKE WHAT I HAVE IN MIND!



YOU SOUND JUST LIKE MY FATHER! I'M NOT READY TO WORRY ABOUT A CAREER--- NOT YET! BUT I'LL COME AROUND WHEN I AM! I HAVE TO SPLIT NOW! THANKS FOR TELLING ME ABOUT MY INHERITANCE FROM GRANDFATHER!

I'LL GO TO THE BANK TOMORROW AND GET MY ACCOUNT FIXED UP!



NOW I DON'T HAVE TO SWEAT TOMORROW FOR A WHILE! I'VE BEEN THROUGH HELL, AND I'VE GOT A VACATION COMING!

THINK I'LL TAKE THE MONEY AND JUST GROOVE FOR A WHILE! MAN, I CAN DEFINITELY DIG IT!

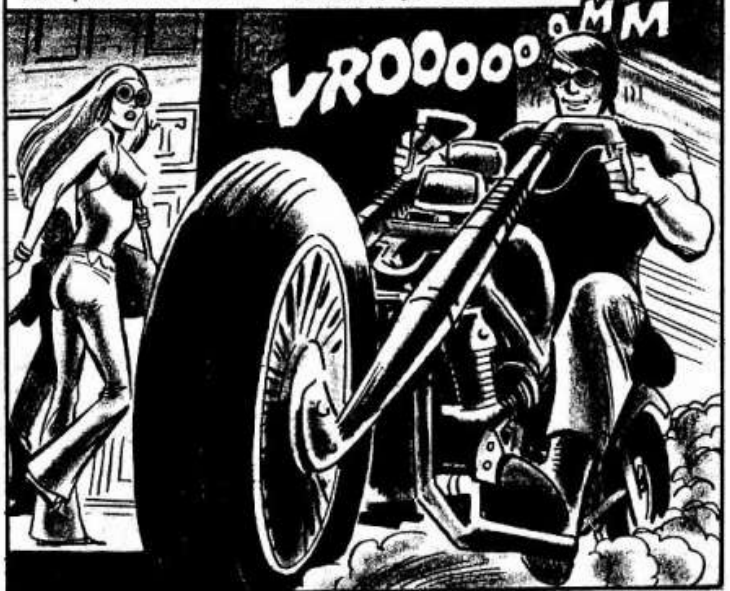


WITH MY UNCLE OUT OF THE WAY, I SPENT THE NEXT FEW DAYS JUST TOOLING AROUND L.A.--- UNTIL I LAID EYES ON WHAT I KNEW I'D BEEN LOOKING FOR ALL ALONG---



I HAD TO FACE IT, BIKES WERE IN MY BLOOD! SO I DIPPED INTO THE OLD BANK ACCOUNT---

--- AND RODE AWAY ON THE DREAM OF MY LIFE, A SPANKING NEW HARLEY SPORTSTER!





THEN, I
SPENT MORE
THAN A
MONTH
RIDING ALL
OVER
SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA
...



...JUST DIGGING ON EVERYTHING THERE WAS TO SEE THERE THAT
I'D NEVER CAUGHT BEFORE!

AND THAT WAS WHERE I DECIDED TO MAKE MY BED!
I'D INHERITED BETTER THAN A HUNDRED GRAND
FROM MY GRANDFATHER ---



--- SO I USED BETTER THAN A QUARTER
OF IT TO SET UP HOUSEKEEPING!



MAN, DID I KEEP SOME KIND OF HOUSE! PARTIES ALMOST
EVERY NIGHT---

-- ALONG
WITH MORE
WOMEN
THAN I'D
EVER
KNOWN
EXISTED!

THEN, WITH THAT KIND OF SCENE, THERE WAS ALSO PLENTY
OF ACTION---

--WHICH I COULD DIG ON, JUST TO KEEP ME LOOSE---



HEY, BABY YOU GOT
SO LITTLE ON ANY-
WAYS -- WHY NOT
TAKE IT ALL OFF?

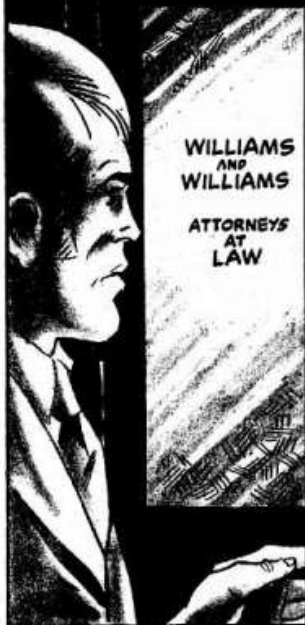
RIP



CRUNCH

AND IT SURE KEPT ME LOOSE---

BUT IT COULDN'T LAST! I MEAN, A MAN CAN ONLY LIVE THAT KIND OF LIFE FOR SO LONG... EVENTUALLY I FOUND THE MONEY RUNNING OUT, AND I WAS GETTING **BORED**---



WILLIAMS
AND
WILLIAMS

ATTORNEYS
AT
LAW

SO I BROKE DOWN AND WENT TO SEE MY UNCLE ABOUT A **JOB**--

BRICK! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, BOY! I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU'D DROP BY!

YEAH, I SHOULD'VE COME SOONER! I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T COME BEFORE NOW!



THEN, AFTER A LOT OF SMALL TALK, I GOT AROUND TO ASKING IF I COULD COME INTO THE **FIRM**---

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'VE WAITED FOR THIS, SON! AND I'VE BEEN SAVING THIS OFFICE FOR YOU!

YOUR FATHER AND I HAVE NEVER GOTTEN ALONG, AND IT'S A GREAT VICTORY FOR ME TO GET YOU---

-- WHEN I KNOW HOW MUCH HE WANTS YOU TO WORK FOR HIM!



YOU LOOK JUST **PERFECT** THERE, MY BOY! YOU'RE GOING TO GO PLACES WITH THIS FIRM! WE HANDLE ONLY **BIG STAR** ACCOUNTS, YOU KNOW, AND I HAVE A FEELING YOUR YOUTH AND GOOD LOOKS ARE GOING TO COME IN **HANDY**!

BUT FOR NOW JUST MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME--- GET USED TO YOUR **SURROUNDINGS**! MONDAY WE'LL START DOING **BUSINESS**!



AND WHAT BUSINESS HE HAD IN MIND WHEN MONDAY ROLLED AROUND---

HEY, MAN! OLD WILLIAMS IS COMING UP IN THIS WORLD!

NEVER SAW A MOUTHPIECE THAT LOOKED LIKE YOU BEFORE!

JULIE STORM, I PRESUME!



IN THE FLESH, ALMOST-- BUT WE'LL WORK ON THAT WHEN I GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER!

SHE WAS THE HOTTEST FEMALE PROPERTY IN THE ROCK WORLD, AND IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO SEE WHY---

I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY **BUSINESS**! JUST WANTED TO SEE WHAT THE **NEW MAN** WAS LIKE!

WELL, DO I PASS INSPECTION?

IN **SPADES**, BABY! TELL YOU WHAT, I'M THROWING A BASH AT MY PAD IN THE **CANYON** TONIGHT! I WANT YOU TO **COME**!



AND SO, THAT NIGHT I BEGAN MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT FOR THE FIRM--- KNOWING THAT IT COULD VERY WELL LEAD TO **TROUBLE**---



MY JOB WAS TO KEEP A **CLOSE EYE** ON JULIE, SINCE IT HAD BEEN RUMORED THAT SHE WAS HAVING PROBLEMS WITH **DRUGS**---

THEN I WENT INSIDE TO GET A FIRSTHAND LOOK AT THE KIND OF PARTY SHE THREW---



-- IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO FIND OUT! EVERYBODY SEEMED TO BE REALLY TURNED ON, BUT WHETHER ON BOOZE, DRUGS, MUSIC OR A COMBINATION OF IT ALL REMAINED TO BE SEEN---



BRICK, BABY! I WAS AFRAID YOU WOULDN'T MAKE IT!

YOU'RE LOOKING A LITTLE ON THE STRAIGHT SIDE-- BUT WE CAN FIX THAT!

I'VE GOT FAITH IN THAT! WHEN DO WE GET STARTED?



RIGHT NOW, BABY!

MMMM! YOU TALKED ME INTO IT! ALTHOUGH IT ISN'T THE KIND OF TRIP I EXPECTED TO TAKE!

SHE'S HIGH AS A KITE, BUT I THINK IT'S POT! THANK GOD IT'S NOT SOMETHING HEAVIER!



YOU CAN GO ANYWHERE YOUR MIND WANTS YOU TO, LOVER-- AND RIGHT NOW LITTLE JULIE HAS TO SPLIT!

BUT I'LL BE BACK, SO DON'T GO 'WAY!

JUST MINGLE WITH THE GANG AND HAVE A BLAST!

BETTER FOLLOW HER, JUST TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT SHE'S UP TO!

ABOUT TEN SECONDS LATER, THE TRAIL STARTED TO HEAT UP--



YOU BETTER COME WITH ME, DOLL! THE CLAW WANTS TO SEE YOU!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYIN'? I GOT NO BUSINESS WITH HIM!

THAT'S NOT THE WAY HE TELLS IT! AND HE'S THE MAN! NOW COME ON, SO'S I DON'T HAVE TO GET ROUGH WITH YOU!



I'D HEARD THE WHOLE THING THROUGH THE **DOOR**, AND I JUST GOT OUT OF SIGHT BEFORE THEY HUSTLED HER AWAY---



I COULD HAVE SAVED HER **THEN**, BUT I DECIDED I'D **FOLLOW** THEM AND PERHAPS FIND OUT **MORE** ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON ---

SO I HOPPED ON MY BIKE AND CHASED THE LIMOUSINE I'D SEEN THEM SHOVE **JULIE** INTO ---



HOPE THIS LITTLE CHASE WILL GIVE ME SOME OF THE ANSWERS I'M LOOKING FOR---

THEY LED ME TO A BEACH HOUSE IN ONE OF THE FEW NEARLY-DESERTED SECTIONS OF **MALIBU** ---



--- WHERE I PARKED MY BIKE AND MOVED CLOSER ON **FOOT**, FIGURING I HAD TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN **INSIDE** ---

I SAW IT **ALL**, BUT I COULDN'T MAKE MY **MOVE** YET! THERE WAS TOO MUCH TO LEARN ---



GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME! HELP! SOMEBODY PLEASE HELP ME!

BUT I ALMOST THREW THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET INFORMATION AWAY WHEN I GOT TO THE HOUSE AND SAW WHAT THEY WERE UP TO ---



TIE HER UP GOOD, CLANCY! IT'LL MAKE OUR JOB A LOT EASIER!

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?! WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?!

WHY DON'T YOU GUESS, LADY?!



THE CLAW IS **UNHAPPY** THAT YOU KICKED THE HABIT, BUT WE THINK WE CAN **FIX** THAT FOR HIM!

NOOOO! OH, GOD, PLEASE DON'T! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT I WENT THROUGH TO **QUIT!**

PLEASE DON'T! **EEEEEEEEEE!**





I DIDN'T
SNAP OUT OF
IT UNTIL THE
NEXT
MORNING...

GOD--- HEAD SPLITTING
FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO---

--- HEAVE MY
GUTS OUT!



THEN I
SAW IT---

WHAT'S THIS? MAN,
NOT ONLY DID THEY
BRING ME HOME---

-- THEY ALSO LEFT ME
A LOVE NOTE!



You are *lucky*
to be alive!
Interfere again
and you *won't* be!



DAMN! THIS
DOESN'T ADD UP!
IT DOESN'T FIGURE
THAT THEY'D LET
ME GO!

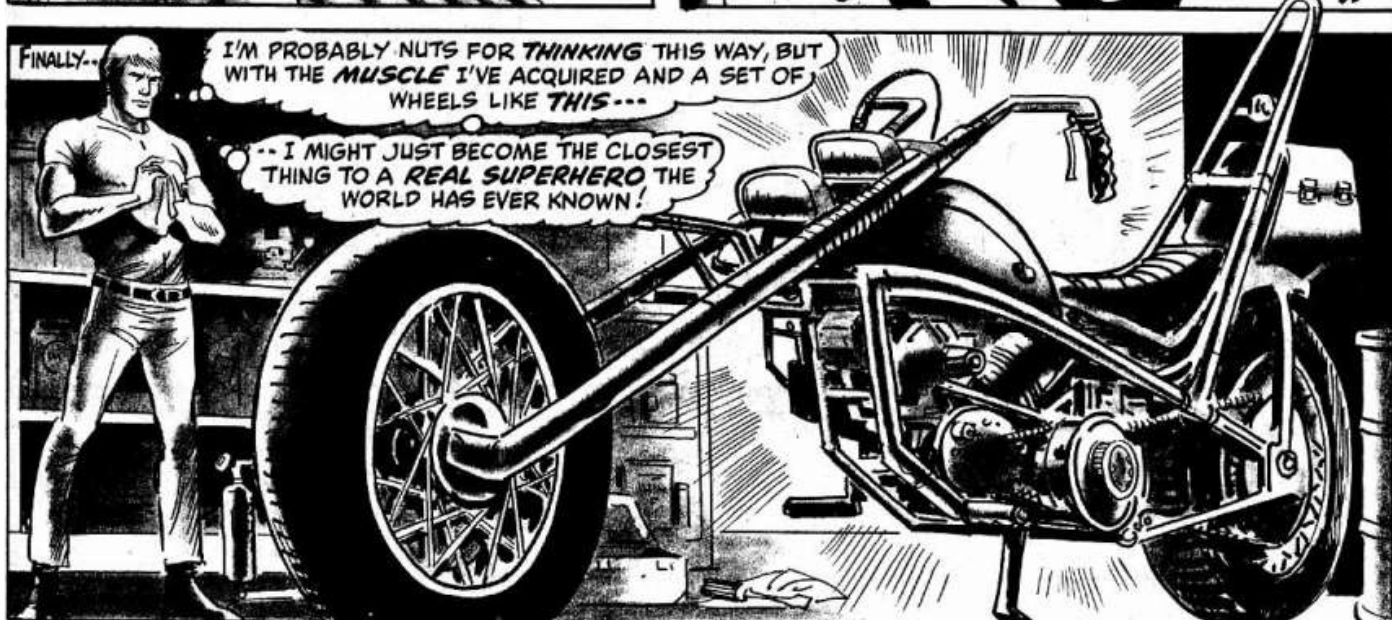
BUT THEY
DID, AND NOW
I HAVE TO DECIDE
WHAT MY NEXT
MOVE IS!



AS IF I
DIDN'T
KNOW
ALREADY!
I ONLY
PLANNED
THIS AS A
GAG AT
FIRST---

--- BUT NOW IT LOOKS
LIKE IT JUST MIGHT
TURN OUT TO BE FOR
REAL!

MAYBE I'M
KIDDING MYSELF
-- BUT I HAVE
TO TRY!



LAS VEGAS, AMERICAN MECCA OF FREQUENT LOSERS LOOKING FOR THAT ONE **BIG BREAK**... HOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE ENTERTAINMENT FIELD AND THE BIGGEST **CASH BUNDLES** ON EARTH... STARTING POINT IN THE CAREER OF WOULD-BE STAR **MARIAN MICHAELS**, ONE OF MANY YOUNG HOPEFULS TRYING TO BREAK THROUGH IN **SIN CITY, USA**...

LAS VEGAS, AMERICAN MECCA OF ORGANIZED CRIME IN SPITE OF CLOSE SCRUTINY BY THE STATE GAMING COMMISSION... CITY WHERE TOP SYNDICATE HEADS GATHER BY THE **HUNDREDS** TO PLOT THEIR NEXT STEP IN GAINING A STRANGLEHOLD ON THE NATION'S ECONOMY... A PLACE WHERE SOON THE MERE **FLAPPING OF WINGS** MAY STRIKE TERROR INTO THOSE BLACK HEARTS, THANKS TO THE UNHERALDED COMING OF...



AND IN THE BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM
OF THE WORLD-FAMED *DESERT VILLAGE*.

WHAT DOES THIS
MEAN? WHY
WOULD ANYONE
WANT TO
THREATEN ME?

ESPECIALLY
OVER SOME-
THING SO
MEANING-
LESS AS...

...A
PAIR
OF
BOOTS!

THE
NOTE SAID
I SHOULD
LEAVE THE
BOOTS IN MY
DRESSING
ROOM!

AH, NOTHING TO WORRY
ABOUT! PROBABLY JUST SOME
NUTTY SOUL BROTHER TRYING
FOR A SOUVENIR!

JUST THE SAME, I THINK
I'LL WEAR THEM ON STAGE
TONIGHT!



THE SHOW MUST
GO ON... EVEN WHEN
THERE'S A DEATH
THREAT INVOLVED!

ALL RIGHT,
LARRY! BE
RIGHT THERE!

CURTAIN IN
TWO MINUTES
MISS MICHAELS!

LADIES
AND
GENTLEMEN...

...THE DESERT VILLAGE
IS PROUD TO PRESENT

...MISS MARIAN
MICHAELS!



OPENING NIGHT IN LAS VEGAS,
THE DREAM OF ANY PERFORMER...



...THE INTRODUCTION, THE LUKEWARM
APPLAUSE, THE POUNDING PULSE,
THE SWEAT...



THEN THE
FIRST FEW
NOTES OF
THE FIRST
SONG...



...THE NOTES
WHICH CAN
MAKE OR
BREAK YOU...

AND THE AUDIENCE BEGINS TO REALLY PERK UP!



YOU JUST
GOTTA
HEAR
THIS GAL!

I'M TRYING,
BABY! JUST
HOLD DOWN
ON THE RING-
A-DING-DING
SO I CAN
HEAR HER!

WHERE'S
THAT
WAITER
WITH OUR
DRINKS?

SO GET SET
TO LET THE
GOOD TIMES
ROLL, WHILE
WE MAKE IT
WITH SOME
DOWN HOME
SOUL.

GO ONNA LAY
THE FUNKY
BROADWAY
ON YOU,
AND KEEP
HOPIN' IT'LL
REACH
YOU, TOO.

SOME SOUND!
HAVE TO GET
HER ON
LAUGH-IN!

FORGET THE
SHOW! HOW CAN
I GET HER TO
MY PLACE?

OFFER ME A
YEAR'S SUPPLY
OF BAGELS
AND LOX AND
I'LL HAVE HER
THERE IN AN
HOUR!

THAT
CRUCIAL
OPENER IS OVER,
NOW YOU BOW
AND AWAIT THE
VERDICT...



...THEN RELAX... AND GET READY TO GO ON WITH THE SHOW...







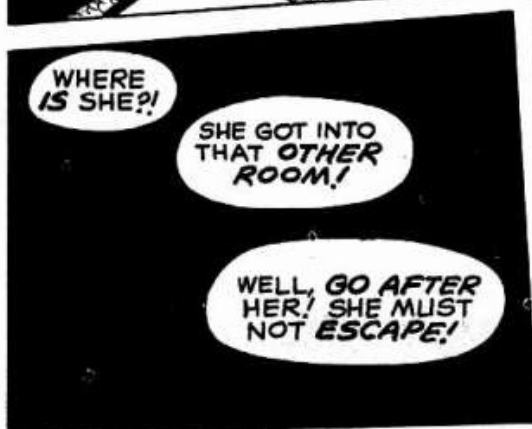
HAVE TO ACT FAST... NOW!

STOP HER!

MADE IT... AND GOT THE LIGHT, TOO!

DRAW YOUR WEAPONS!

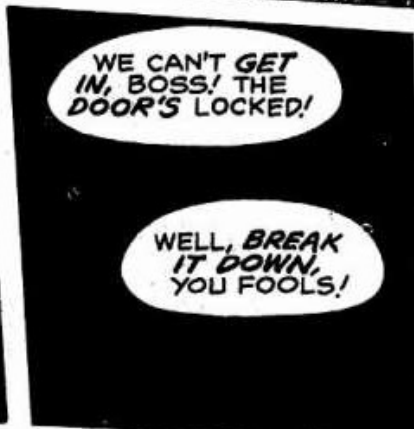
KILL HER IF YOU MUST!



WHERE IS SHE?!

SHE GOT INTO THAT OTHER ROOM!

WELL, GO AFTER HER! SHE MUST NOT ESCAPE!



WE CAN'T GET IN, BOSS! THE DOOR'S LOCKED!

WELL, BREAK IT DOWN, YOU FOOLS!



WHUMP!

THEY'RE ALMOST THROUGH! ONE MORE BLOW AND...

WHUMP!

...THERE! NOW I'LL BE READY FOR THEM!



WE'RE IN, BOSS, AND... AAAGGHH!

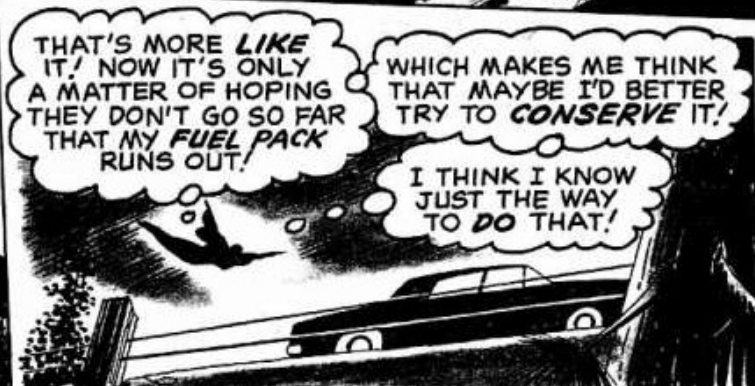
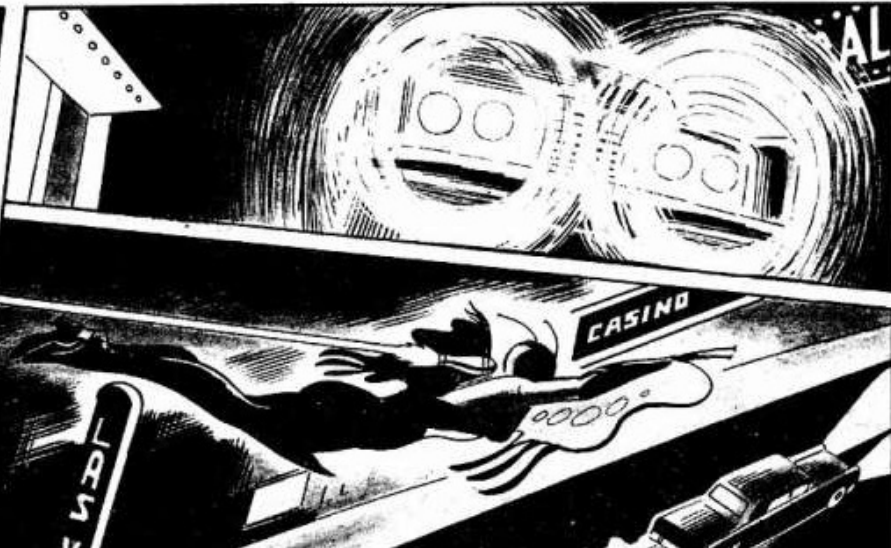
LIGHT... BLINDING!

CLOSE YOUR EYES! OR LOSE YOUR SENSE OF SIGHT FOREVER!

I WILL SPARE YOU YOUR SIGHT THIS TIME... FOR REASONS WHICH YOU MAY NOT UNDERSTAND!

BUT BE WARNED... IF YOU EVER FACE ME AGAIN, YOU MAY NOT BE SO FORTUNATE!





THE **FINGER CUPS** SHOULD BE STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD ME TO THE **TOP** OF THE CAR!

JUST A MATTER OF **TIMING...**
A LITTLE **CLOSER...**

MADE IT! NOW IF ONLY THEY DIDN'T **HEAR ME!**

I THINK I JUST HEARD A **NOISE** UP THERE!

SURE YUH DID! THE DESERT'S FULL OF **HITCH-HIKING EAGLES!** NOW **CLAM UP** WILL YOU?!

THE **ADHESIVE CUPS** ARE WORKING **FINE!** NOW TO TURN OFF THE **POWER PACK!**

NO EASY **TRICK** AT A HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR...

... BUT... I **HAVE IT!**

NOTHING TO DO NOW BUT ENJOY THE **RIDE...** UNTIL I FIND OUT WHERE WE'RE **GOING!**

AND, AN HOUR **LATER...**

IF WE DON'T GET THERE **SOON**, I'M GONNA CATCH MY **DEATH...**

... PROBABLY WILL BE TOO STOPPED UP TO GO ON TOMORROW NIGHT!
: **SNIFF! SNIFF!** :

OOPS! NO MORE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE **COMMON COLD!**

LOOKS LIKE THE **JOURNEY'S OVER...** OR MAYBE JUST **BEGINNING!**



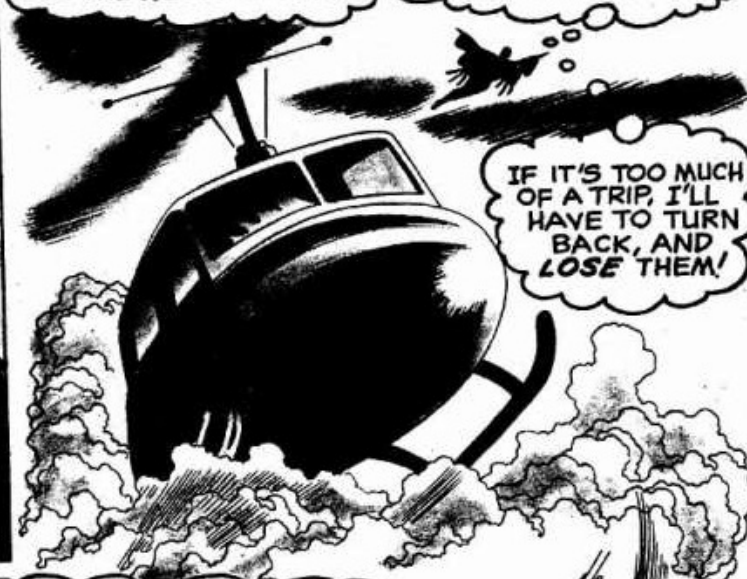
IS EVERYTHING
READY FOR
THE **TRIP**?

ROGER, CLAW!
I'VE RADIOED
THE **COMMUNE!**
THEY'RE EAGERLY
AWAITING YOUR
ARRIVAL!

THEN LET'S
GO! I
MUSN'T
DELAY A
SECOND
LONGER!

THAT'S WHAT I WAS
AFRAID OF! THEY'RE
GOING SOMEWHERE
IN THE **HELICOPTER!**

NOW I CAN ONLY HOPE
IT ISN'T **TOO FAR,**
AND THEY DON'T **FLY**
TOO HIGH!



IF IT'S TOO MUCH
OF A **TRIP,** I'LL
HAVE TO **TURN**
BACK, AND
LOSE THEM!



ONLY ABOUT **45 MINUTES**
LEFT ON THE **POWER PACK...**

...PLUS 15 IN
THE **RESERVE!**

AT LEAST THEY'RE **FLYING**
LOW! THEY COULD EASILY
SHAKE ME BY CLIMBING
OVER A COUPLE OF
HUNDRED **FEET!**

WELL, NOTHING FOR
ME TO DO BUT **HANG**
IN THERE! ANOTHER
TWENTY MINUTES OR
SO SHOULD TELL IF
I'M ON A **WILD**
GOOSE CHASE!

IF THEY'RE TAKING
A **LONG HOP** I
MIGHT AS WELL
FORGET IT!



HOWEVER, AFTER TWENTY-MINUTES *FLYING TIME*...

THIS IS *IT!* ANOTHER COUPLE OF MINUTES AND I'LL ONLY HAVE ENOUGH FUEL TO GET ME BACK TO *VEGAS!*

DO I KEEP *AFTER* THEM... OR DO I TURN BACK AND *FORGET IT*...

I SOMEHOW FEEL THIS IS MORE *IMPORTANT* THAN IT APPEARS... AND THAT I SHOULD STAY ON THE TRAIL NO MATTER *WHAT!*

BUT MAYBE THERE'S A *BETTER* WAY! SINCE I CAN'T FOLLOW THEM ANY FARTHER...

...AT LEAST I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET THE *BOOTS* BACK!

THEY MIGHT GIVE ME SOME KIND OF *CLUE* AS TO WHAT THIS IS ALL *ABOUT!*



IT'S EITHER THAT OR *NOTHING*... SO...

...*HERE GOES!*

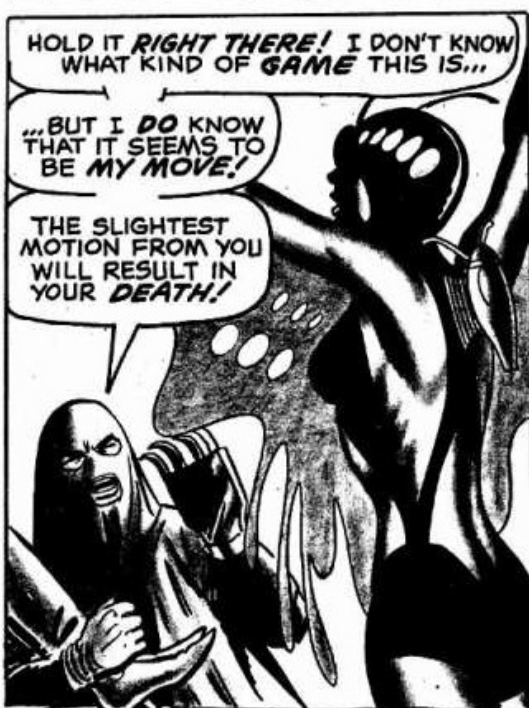
MADE MY *CONTACT*... NOW IT'S ONLY A QUESTION OF OPENING THE *DOOR*...

THIS IS PROBABLY THE FIRST TIME AN AIRCRAFT WAS EVER *HJACKED* FROM THE OUTSIDE...

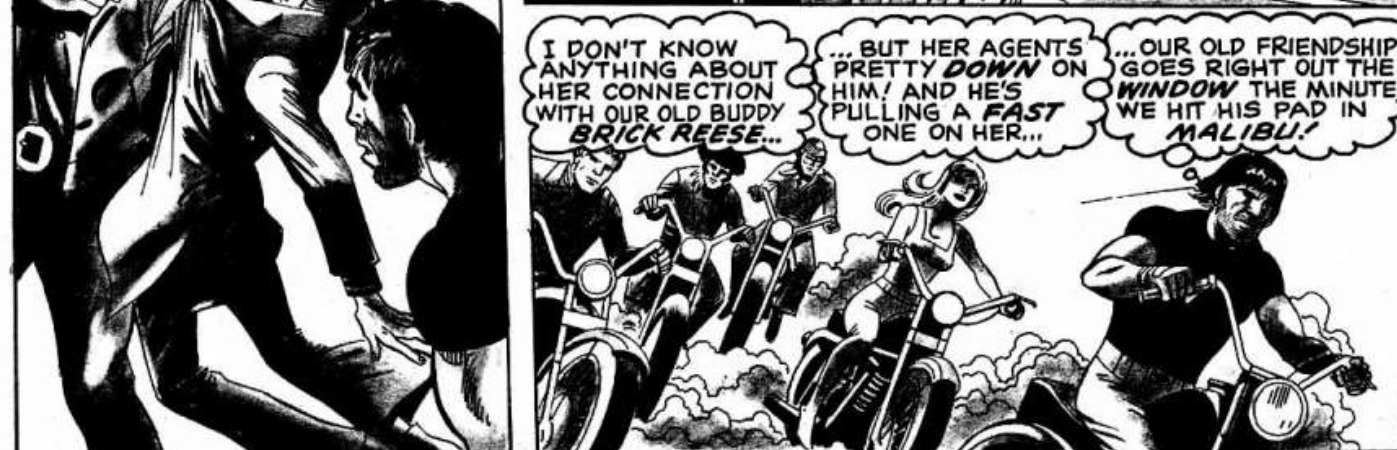
...BUT THEN, NO PILOT EVER FACED THE *BUTTERFLY* BEFORE!

NOW JUST HAND OVER THOSE *BOOTS*, AND MAYBE I WON'T MAKE YOU FLY TO *CUBA!*









AND A SHORT TIME LATER, AS THE RIDERS ROAR TOWARD **LOS ANGELES...**

...THEIR LIGHTS SUDDENLY PICK UP A **FIGURE** STANDING BESIDE THE ROAD IN THE **DISTANCE...**

...DISCOVERING AS THEY DRAW **ALONGSIDE** THE **HITCHER** THAT IT IS...

...**MARIAN!**
MARIAN
MICHAELS!

ANIMAL!
GOD, WHAT A **BREAK THIS** IS! I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO **WALK BACK** TO TOWN!

NO SWEAT ON **THAT** ACCOUNT NOW... BUT WHAT'RE YOU **DOIN'** OUT HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?

ANYTHING YOU **SAY, BABY,** BUT...

NO **BUTS, ANIMAL!** THERE ISN'T TIME! I WANT YOU TO **TAKE** THESE SOMEWHERE...

I... DON'T HAVE TIME TO **EXPLAIN** NOW! YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO **TRUST ME!**

...SOMEWHERE WHERE THEY'LL BE **SAFE!** I KNOW... TAKE THEM TO MY **LAWYER'S** IN **LA!** YOU ALL KNOW **BRICK REESE!**

THIS IS ALL OVER MY HEAD... BUT WE'LL DO WHAT YOU SAY!

WE WERE HEADIN' TO SEE **BRICK ANYWAY!** RUBY WILL TAKE YOU BACK TO TOWN... AND WE'LL CHECK IN WITH YOU WHEN WE HIT THE **BIG TOWN!**

THANK YOU! I KNOW IT SEEMS STRANGE... BUT I SWEAR IT'S A MATTER OF **LIFE AND DEATH!**

END OF BUTTERFLY CHAPTER!

INTRODUCING...

THE WILD BUNCH!



OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, FAMOUS FOR THE OAKLAND BAY BRIDGE, THE OAKLAND RAIDERS, HE'LLS ANGELS AND BETTER WEATHER THAN NEARBY SAN FRANCISCO. LIKE MOST AMERICAN CITIES, IT HAS ITS GOOD SIDES AND ITS BAD ONES. ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON YOU CAN FIND ABOUT ANYTHING YOU WANT THERE FROM A PRO SPORTS SPECTACLE TO A RED HOT GHETTO STICKBALL GAME...OR, IF YOU'RE REALLY A STICKLER FOR ACTION, AND IF YOU'RE MAN ENOUGH TO TAKE IT, YOU CAN CROSS THE TRACKS TO A SLEEZY LITTLE BAR AND PLAY THE GAME WITH THE BIG BOYS! BUT BE WARNED...ONCE YOU OPEN THE DOOR, YOU LEAVE CIVILIZATION BEHIND. BABY...YOU'RE IN **WILD BUNCH COUNTRY...**

THEY'RE A **COLORFUL** GROUP, TO SAY THE LEAST...

...TAKE **ANIMAL**, FOR INSTANCE...



HE'S THE SELF-PROCLAIMED **LEADER** OF THE GROUP...



...AND NO **BIKER** ANYWHERE HAD BETTER **ARGUE** WITH HIM ABOUT IT.



THEN THERE'S **DEKE**! HE WAS A COLLEGE BASKETBALL STAR A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO...



...BUT HE CHUCKED ALL THAT FOR A MORE **REWARDING** TYPE OF SPORT...



...SCORING **BASKET CASES** INSTEAD OF JUST BASKETS!



AND THE GANG WOULDN'T BE COMPLETE WITHOUT **SLINKER**...



...AN **APPROPRIATE** NICKNAME IF EVER THERE WAS ONE...



WHAT HE LACKS IN **SIZE**, HE MAKES UP FOR IN **OTHER** WAYS!



CURLY IS THE PRETTY BOY
OF THE BUNCH...



...BUT DON'T LET HIS MOVIE
STAR LOOKS **FOOL** YOU...



...LIKE A LOT OF NOT-TOO-BRIGHT
OUTLAWS HAVE BEEN!



AND FINALLY THERE'S THE **BEAUTY**
AMONG THE BEASTS...



...**RUBY** IS SORT OF A DIAMOND
IN THE ROUGH...



...WITH THE EMPHASIS ON THE **ROUGH**
IF YOU HAPPEN TO RUB HER THE
WRONG WAY!



THERE THEY ARE! A GROOVY GROUP OF YOUTHS OUT FOR AN
AFTERNOON OF **FUN AND GAMES**...

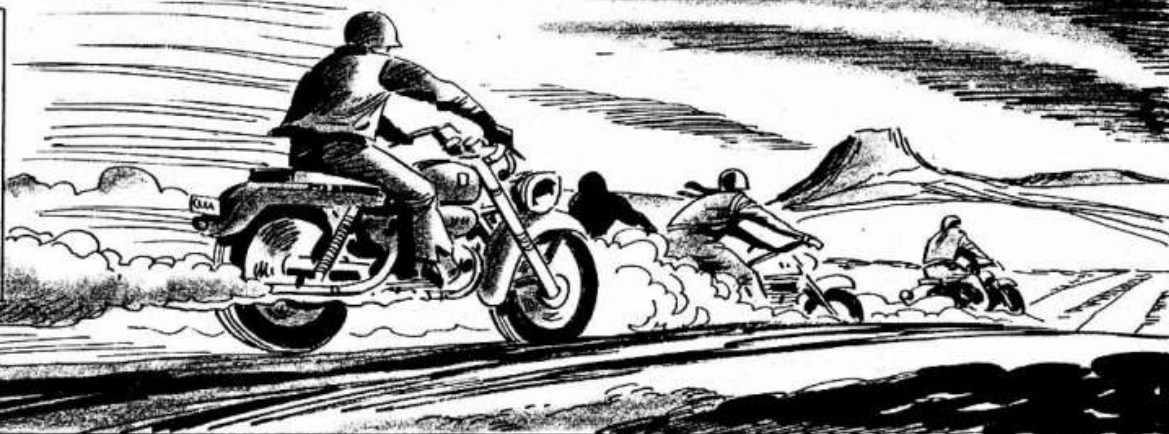


...AND IF YOU STILL THINK YOU'RE **UP** TO IT...
YOU'RE CORDIALLY INVITED TO **RIDE ON**
WITH THEM...



...THE
RUN
BEGINS
ON THE
VERY
NEXT
PAGE!

THE SILENCE HANGING OVER THE NEARLY DESERTED HIGHWAY WHICH CONNECTS LOS ANGELES WITH LAS VEGAS IS SHATTERED BY THE ROAR OF MOTORCYCLE ENGINES...



STRADDLING THEIR STEEL STEEDS, THE WILD BUNCH ARE TRAVELING WESTWARD...

...ON A GRIM MISSION THEY KNOW **NOTHING** ABOUT, OTHER THAN THAT THEY ARE TO DELIVER A PAIR OF **BOOTS** TO AN OLD FRIEND WHO IS NOW AN **L.A. ATTORNEY!**

NONE OF THIS ADDS UP SOMEHOW... BUT I GUESS IF MARIAN SAYS SO, WE HAVE TO TAKE HER WORD FOR IT!

AFTER ALL, WE'VE BEEN UPTIGHT WITH HER FOR YEARS NOW! NO REASON TO THINK SHE'D SEND US ON A BUMMER!



WHAT AM I TRYIN' TO CONVINCE MYSELF OF?! MARIAN MICHAELS IS SOUL SISTER NUMBER ONE IN MY BOOK!

BUT THEN I AIN'T EVEN BEEN TRUSTIN' **BLACK BROTHERS** LATELY!

GOTTA COME OFF THIS HATE TRIP MAN! THE WILD BUNCH IS ALL I GOT...AND IF THEY TELL ME TO DO SOMETHING, THEN I JUST GOTTA **DO IT!**

I HAVE TO START TRUSTIN' SOMEBODY SOMETIME!



PULL IN!

GOTTA FIND OUT IF THE OTHERS FEEL AS FUNNY ABOUT THIS AS I DO!

MAYBE I'M BEIN' TOO SUSPICIOUS, BUT I GOTTA KNOW FOR SURE!



OKAY, MEN! I GOTTA ASK YOU SOMETHIN'! AND I WANT YOU TO LAY THE ANSWERS ON ME STRAIGHT!

WHY ARE WE FLYIN' TOWARD L.A. WITH A PAIR OF **BOOTS**?!

I MEAN, WHAT KIND OF DEAL IS MARIAN GETTIN' US INTO? I KNOW SHE NEVER BUMMED US BEFORE...

...BUT YOU GOTTA ADMIT THIS SCENE IS PRETTY **HEAVY!** WHADDA YOU DUDES THINK?





WELL, IF YUH ASK **ME**, I SAY WE JUST DO LIKE THE **LADY SAYS!**

I MEAN, SHE'S OUR OLD **RAP** AND EVERY-THING! WE GOTTA **TRUST** HER!

...DON'T WE?!



THAT **SINKS** IT! IF EVEN **CURLY** SENSES THERE'S SOMETHIN' **WRONG...**

...WELL IT'S KIND OF LIKE THE **HANDWRITIN'** ON THE **WALL!**

I SAY WE GO BACK TO **VEGAS** AND GET THE **LOWDOWN** FROM **MARIAN!**



DEKE?!

AWW, YOU KNOW **ME**, MAN! I DON'T TRUST **ANYBODY** BUT I'M TRYIN' TO **LEARN!**

AND IF WE FINK OUT ON **MARIAN**, THEN THAT'S GONNA MAKE ME THINK THAT **NOBODY** IN THIS WORLD TRUSTS **NOBODY!**



YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YUH **MEAN!** BUT TO RUN THAT FAR WITH A PAIR'A SHOES TO GIVE TO **BRICK REESE...**

...AND I AIN'T LOOKIN' FORWARD TO **SEEIN'** HIM AFTER ALL...

...HE AIN'T EVEN **CALLED** US SINCE HE GOT BACK FROM **NAM!**



SPEED FREAK!

THEY OUGHTTA TAKE AWAY YOUR **LICENSE!**

KNOCK IT OFF! WE GOT A BIG **DECISION** TO MAKE! **OKAY?**



STOP THE CAR!

HUH? WHY YUH WANNA DO **THAT**, BOSS?!

SHUT UP, IDIOT! DO AS I SAY! YOU DIDN'T SEE WHAT WAS SLING ACROSS THE REAR OF ONE OF THOSE **MOTORCYCLES!**





GET OUT OF THE WAY, JAKE!

LET US GET A CLEAR SHOT AT HIM!

LET'S GO!



DROP IT ...OR I'LL BREAK YOUR ARM!

LET'S GET RID OF THE HARDWARE AND FIGHT THIS OUT FAIR!

CRACK

SNAP!



SEE HOW MUCH TROUBLE YOU GOT YERSELF IN BY PULLIN' A ROD?!

HE DOESN'T SEE IT! IF ONLY I CAN REACH IT!

SNAP!



LOOKS LIKE EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL...

...BUT I'LL STILL GET SET UP...JUST IN CASE!



TIME RUNNING OUT! I'LL HAVE TO FORGET THE MEN!

NOTHING MATTERS BUT THE BOOTS!



THEY LOOK TO BE ONLY SIX FEET OR SO AWAY...

...IF THEY'RE ANY FARTHER...MY EXTENSION WON'T REACH!



I HAVE THEM! NOW TO GET THEM INSIDE!

JUST HOPE THE MEN KEEP THEM BUSY SO THEY WON'T NOTICE!



THIS IS JUST LIKE SUNDAY AFTERNOON BACK IN OAKLAND!

EXCEPT THESE CRUMBS ARE A LITTLE TOUGHER ...MUST KEEP IN GOOD SHAPE!

MADE IT!



HEY! THE OTHERS ARE SPLITTIN'!

THE BOSS IS LEAVIN' US!

SLINKER! CHECK FOR THE BOOTS!





BUT AS MORNING
CASTS ITS EVIL
SPELL OVER THE
BROILING DESERT...

RUBY'S
COMRADES
FIND COM-
PANIONSHIP
OF THE
OPPOSITE
SEX THE
LAST THING
ON THEIR
MINDS...



WE MUST'VE GONE
A HUNDRED MILES
BY NOW! HOW MUCH
LONGER'S HE GONNA
KEEP RUNNIN'??!



I DUNNO...BUT I
CAN'T EAT MUCH
MORE OF THIS
STINKIN' DUST!

I'VE ABOUT HAD IT, BOSS MAN!
WHAT SAY WE FORCE HIM TO
MAKE A MOVE?!

OUR CHOPPERS GOT
ENOUGH JUICE TO
TAKE HIM!



I WAS HOPIN' HE'D LEAD US TO SOMETHIN'...
SO WE COULD FIND OUT WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT
ABOUT THOSE BOOTS!

BUT I'M TIRED
OF THIS GAME,
TOO! LET'S POUR
IT ON 'IM!



THEY'RE CLOSIN' IN ON US! CAN'T
YOU GET ANY MORE POWER OF
THIS JUNK HEAP?!

I'M GIVIN' HER ALL
SHE'S GOT, BOSS!
THOSE BIKES ARE
JUST TOO HOT
FOR US!

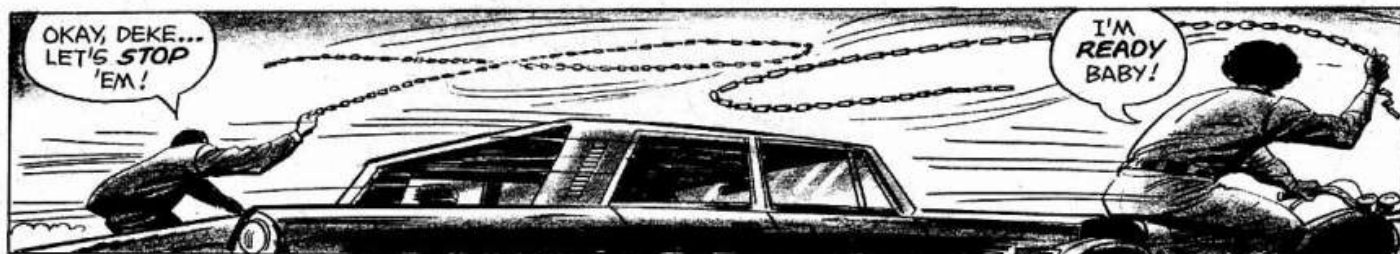


COMMUNE ONE!
COMMUNE ONE!
COME IN!

WE'RE BEING
ATTACKED BY A
MOTORCYCLE
GANG ON PATH
TWO ABOUT TEN
MILES AWAY!

SEND OUT
EMERGENCY
SQUAD! REPEAT...
SEND
EMERGENCY
SQUAD TO OUR
AID!





MORE THAN THAT! A
RESCUE TEAM...COME
TO SEAL YOUR
DEATHS!

HAH! HAH! I TOLD YOU TO RELEASE ME...BUT YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN!

NOW YOU'LL PAY THE PRICE!

CAN'T PAY NO MORE THAN YOU'RE GONNA PAY WHEN I BASH IN YOUR SKULL!



FORGET HIM, CURLY! RUN FOR IT!

THOSE NETS ARE TOO BIG! WE'LL NEVER GET AWAY FROM THEM!



THEY GOT US NAILED!

JUST AS I PREDICTED! AND NOW THERE WILL BE NO ESCAPE FOR YOU!

NUTS, HONKEY! WE AIN'T FINISHED TILL YOU'VE KNOCKED US OUT!



COMING RIGHT UP, MY REBELLIOUS YOUNG FRIEND!

LOOK AT 'EM! MUST BE MORE THAN A HUNDRED!

THIS ROUND GOES TO THEIR SIDE, I'M AFRAID!



IT'S ALL OVER FOR YOU! SO YOU MAY AS WELL STOP STRUGGLING!

HE'S RIGHT! BETTER SAVE OUR STRENGTH TILL LATER!

WE KNOW WHEN WE'RE LICKED!



THEN FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...

NOW, EVERYTHING'S ALL NICE AND TIDY! I'LL JUST GO AFTER THE BOOTS...AND WE'LL BE OFF TO THE COMMUNE!

GUESS AGAIN, DADDY!

DIG OUT, SLINKER! GET THOSE BOOTS OUT OF HERE!

WHA... STOP HIM!







THEN, LONG AFTER NIGHT HAS FALLEN...

WELL, THE OLD SLINK LUCK'S HELD OUT AGAIN!

NO OTHER WAY TO EXPLAIN ME FINDING THAT CAVE TO HIDE IN UNTIL ALL THE SMOKE CLEARED AWAY!

I DIDN'T FIGURE THEY'D CALL FOR THE HUNT FOR ME SO SOON...BUT I GUESS THAT'S LUCK, TOO!



NOW I GOTTA CONCENTRATE ON GETTIN' THESE BOOTS BACK TO MARIAN...

...AND THEN HOPE WE CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO TO BAIL OUT THE GUYS!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT'S GONNA BE...BUT I GOT ME A LONG RIDE TO THINK ABOUT IT!



MEANWHILE... AT A REMOTE COMMUNE LOCATED DEEP IN THE HEART OF THE DESERT...

THESE, FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNE, ARE THE VERY VERMIN WHICH ARE EATING OUT THE HEART OF OUR COUNTRY...

...AND IT IS THEY AND THE THOUSANDS LIKE THEM WHO MUST BE DESTROYED...IF AMERICA IS TO REMAIN THE HOME OF THE FREE!

THEY HAVE STOLEN THE LIFE'S BLOOD OF OUR PATRIOTIC SOCIETY...AND UNLESS IT IS RETURNED...I, AS YOUR LEADER, RECOMMEND THAT THEY REMAIN TIED TO THESE STAKES UNTIL THE DESERT SUN BAKES THE LAST BREATH OF LIFE FROM THEIR BODIES!



HAIL AMERICA...AND HAIL TO THE CLAW, HE WHO WILL SAVE IT!!



COME ON, SLINK! WITHOUT YOU, WE'VE HAD THE MEAT!

IF I'M GONNA DIE, I SURE WISH I COULD FIGURE OUT WHAT FOR!

FASCIST NUT, IT IS THEIR POISON THAT CORRUPTS THIS COUNTRY...AND ONLY OLD SLINK CAN HOPE TO STOP THEM!

END, WILD BUNCH CHAPTER!





TOUCH THAT GIRL AND YOU'RE A DEAD MAN!

YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE DEMANDS, BUDDY!



ONE FALSE MOVE... AND THE GIRL GETS IT!



CAN'T RISK HER TAKING ANOTHER SHOT! LOOKS LIKE SHE'S ALREADY OVERDOSED!

ANYMORE MIGHT BE FATAL FOR HER!



OOOHHHH!

HUH?!



THAT DISTRACTED HIM FOR A SECOND!

HAVE TO ACT NOW!



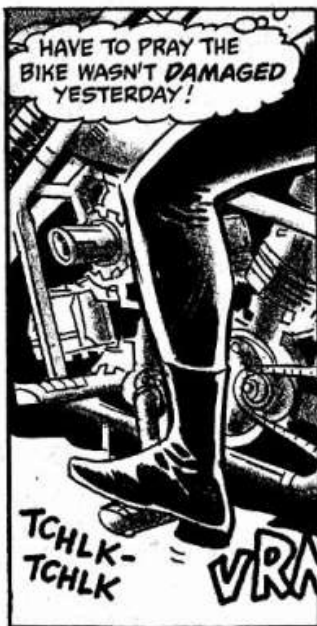
THAT WAS CLOSE! NOW HAVE TO GET HER OUT OF HERE ---

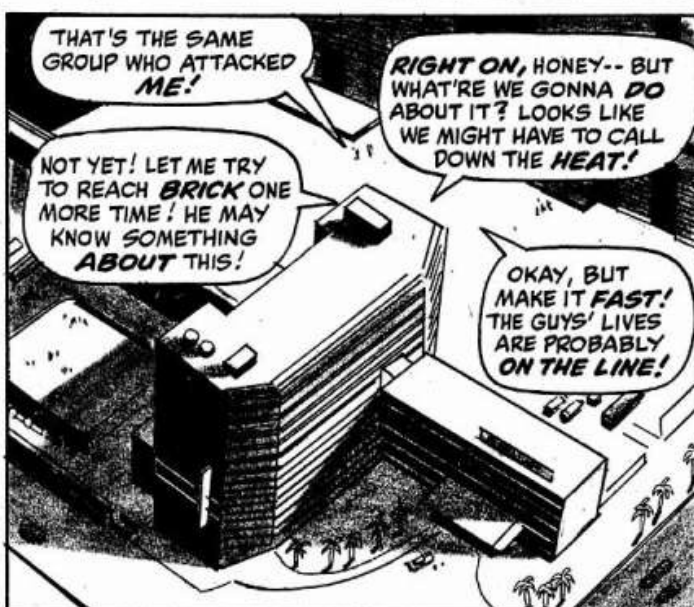
-- BEFORE MORE OF THOSE PUSSYCATS COME BUSTING IN!



SHE'S IN BAD SHAPE! MUST GET HER TO A HOSPITAL...

IF IT'S NOT ALREADY TOO LATE!









AND, AS THE HELL RIDER ROARS DOWN THE LONG, LONESOME HIGHWAY---

YOU DOIN' ANY GOOD WITH THEM ROPES, DEKE?!

NOT ENOUGH TO BRAG ABOUT! I'M GETTIN' AWFUL WEAK! ANOTHER DAY IN THAT SUN AND---

WHY DON'T YOU GUYS ASK HOW I'M DOIN'?



MAN! DIG THE DUMMY! HE'S MADE LIKE THE CHAMP!

AWW, IT WASN'T MUCH! I FIGURED YOU KNEW I'D COME THROUGH FOR YUH!

SHHH! GET OVER HERE AND UNTIE US!

WHILE, A FEW HUNDRED YARDS AWAY---



SO WHAT'S THE STORY, CLAW?! WHERE'S THE STUFF?!

YOU KNOW WE CAN'T CARRY ON WITHOUT THE MONEY WE'LL MAKE FROM SELLING HEROIN!

I'M WELL AWARE OF OUR PLIGHT... BUT I NEED MORE TIME! GIVE ME ANOTHER 24-HOURS... AND I PROMISE I'LL RECOVER IT!



VERY WELL, BUT THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE! WE ARE ALL GATHERED HERE LIVING LIKE PAUPERS IN ORDER THAT WE CAN BUILD AN ARMY---

BUT WE CANNOT ACHIEVE OUR GOAL WITHOUT THE FUNDS FROM DRUG SALES! SO FOR THE SAKE OF THE CAUSE -- AND YOURSELF -- RECOVER THE HEROIN AND RETURN IT HERE IMMEDIATELY!



THEN, WITH ALL FINAL PREPARATIONS MADE, THE CLAW PREPARES TO LEAVE---

LOOKS LIKE THE HEAD MAN IS ABOUT TO SPLIT AGAIN!

PROBABLY GOIN' AFTER SLINKER AND THOSE BOOTS!

CHOC CHOC CHOC

WHY DON'T WE RUSH 'EM?!



CHOC CHOC

CHOC

GET DOWN, STUPID! WE WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE!

HE'S RIGHT, CURLY! OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO SNEAK OUTTA HERE---

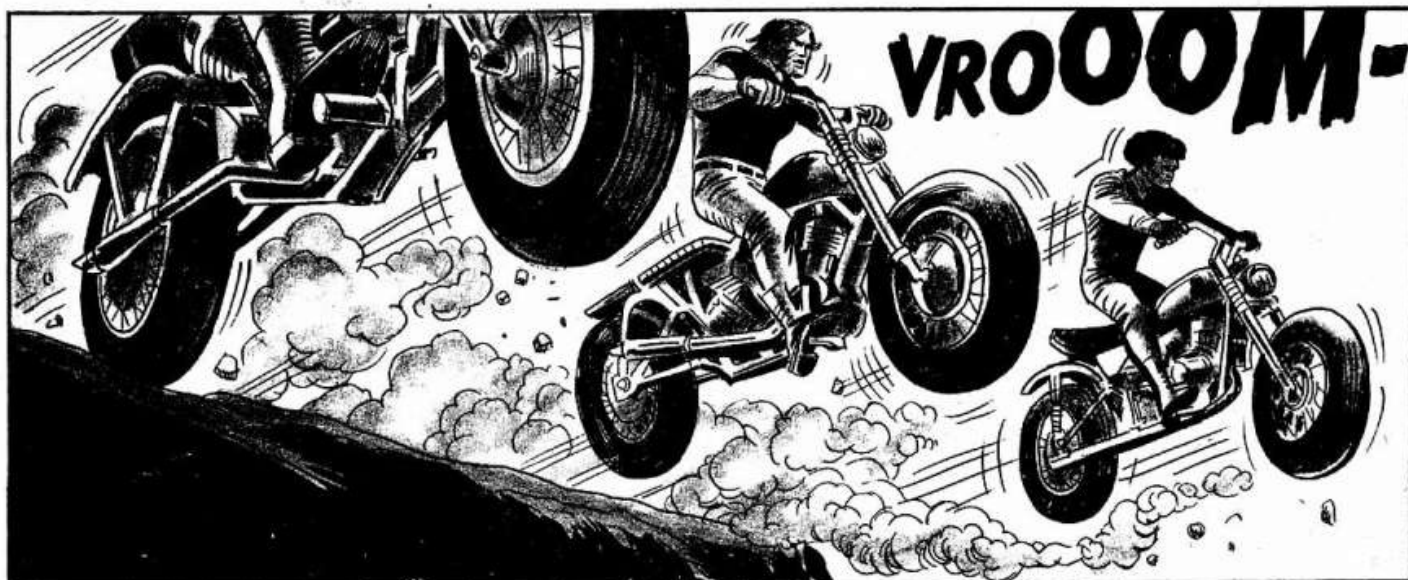
--- AND GAMBLE THAT SLINK AND THE CHICKS CAN HOLD OUT UNTIL WE GET THERE!



NOW HERE'S THE WAY I FIGURE IT! THIS COMMUNE'S BUILT ON A PLATEAU---

-- COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY A CHASM ABOUT TWENTY YARDS WIDE!

SO WHAT WE GOTTA DO IS TO GET OUR BIKES AND MAKE A BREAK FOR IT! AND THAT MEANS WE GOTTA JUMP THE CHASM!





AND, AT THAT MOMENT, SOME THIRTY MILES AWAY---



THEN, AFTER A LONG,
TENSE **HALF-HOUR**...

ALL RIGHT---YOUR
TIME IS **UP!**

YOU SIGNALLED---
AND THE MAN WITH
THE **BOOTS** HASN'T
SHOWED!

JUST GIVE
US ANOTHER
COUPLE'A
MINUTES!
I KNOW
HE'LL **BE**
HERE!



WHILE SEVERAL FLOORS
BELOW---

I'M **HERE!** NOW
I'LL PULL AROUND
BACK AND
CHANGE!

I'VE GOT A
HUNCH THIS MAY
BE A SITUATION
I CAN ONLY
HANDLE AS---



-- **THE
HELL
RIDER!**



I'M NOT **WAITING** ANY
LONGER! COME ACROSS
WITH THE **HEROIN**---

--OR I'M
GOING TO
RIP HER
THROAT
OUT!

LET HIM
HAVE IT,
SLINK!



OKAY-- YOU **WIN!**
HERE'S WHAT YOU
BEEN **LOOKIN' FOR!**

WE WERE JUST
STALLIN' YOU!



I **SUSPECTED**
AS MUCH! BUT IT
DOESN'T MATTER--
SINCE YOU'RE
GOING TO **DIE**
ANYWAY!

I HAVEN'T
HAD A CHANCE
TO TEST THE
**ROCKET
BOOSTERS!**

IF THEY DON'T
WORK-- I'M
GOING TO GET
SMEARED ALL
OVER THE SIDE
OF THE **HOTEL!**



IT'S ALL
RIDING
ON **TWO**
THINGS...
FIRST THE
BOOSTERS
WORKING---

-- AND
SECOND...
MY HITTING
THE **BOARD**
I SET UP!



I
**HIT
IT!**

NOW TO
SHOOT **FULL
POWER**
TO THE **ROCKETS!**



ALL RIGHT!
GUESS I'M
BETTER AT
ROCKETRY
THAN I
REALIZED!



